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Mr. and Mrs. Bill  
 Stokes celebrate  
 50th wedding  
 anniversary

INSIDE

Elba teachers  
 help build  
 go-cart at  
 Kid's College

INSIDE

Local volunteer  
 fire departments  
 receive grant  
 checks

# The Elba Clipper

Volume 107, Number 9

50 Cents

Elba, Alabama

Thursday, August 14, 2003

1 Section, 14 Pages Plus 2 Adv. Inserts

## Elba City Council approves tax increase on tobacco products

by Ferrin Cox, Publisher

The Elba City Council unanimously approved an increased tobacco tax ordinance Monday evening during the regular council meeting. Council members discussed the proposed changes in the tobacco tax during a scheduled work session held immediately before the council meeting. The tax change will be effective October 1st, 2003.

Under the new schedule, tax on cigarettes will increase from .04 to .10 cents per pack. The five count package of cigars will also be taxed at .10 cents, while a box of 50 cigars will carry a \$2.00 tax stamp. Chewing tobacco, snuff, etc. will be taxed at either .15 or .25 per unit, based on size and tobacco content. Tobacco products sold outside the city limits but within the police jurisdiction will be taxed at half the above amounts.

In addition to the increase in taxes, the new ordinance clarifies certain categories of language which was not clear and in the original ordinance, causing some confusion with tobacco license holders.

The council approved two resolutions needed for a Community Development Block Grant application. The grant for \$52,475.00 is to help fund an industrial expansion 12" water line.

Another resolution passed was in support of a Southeast Alabama Gas District plan to change their bylaws to increase and stabilize the amount of money passed to the user cities each year. Under the new proposed bylaws, amendment amounts returned to the municipalities will be based on a five year average of income over expenses.

Monthly bills totaling

\$80,703.12 were approved for payment. This itemized list includes \$10,416.07 transferred to the Elba City Schools, \$10,608.05 owed to the utility board for city utilities, and \$8,523.50 insurance payments and various other normal operating expenses including a check for \$1.98 to EDCO Fasteners.

City Clerk Wayne Grantham issued a plea that motorists be especially watchful in Elba due to the tremendous and varied amount of construction going on all over the city.

No council member had a recommendation for appointment to the Coffee County Board of

Equalization. Mayor Grimes reported he would make a selection and report his decision back to the council at a later date.

The July monthly statistics report from the Elba Police Department indicated 1003 calls for service during the past month, resulting in eight accident investigations, 70 traffic arrests, an increase of 36 from the previous month, 149 warnings, also an increase from the previous month, 27 criminal arrests, two DUI arrests and nine drug arrests. 1 & O reports increased 26 up to a total of 72. During this time officers drove a total of 13,919 miles, 1,836 fewer than the previous month.

## Rumors run rapid following t-shirt incident at Zion Chapel Schools

by Linda Hodge, Editor

School aged children love to wear trendy clothing, but sometimes those faddish must get a definite must not from school officials. This hit close to home last week as school officials and students at Zion Chapel found themselves in a fashion stand-off.

In this particular case, the questionable clothing involved shirts containing the Rebel flag in which students were told not to wear the shirts deemed offensive by some students and other community members. Many locals took exception to this since the school is after all known as the Zion Chapel Rebels.

However, school officials quickly reminded everyone that the Rebel flag is not the school's mascot. Instead, it is an Army Colonel (as shown here with this article).

So, where did the problem stem from last week at Zion Chapel?

Apparently, t-shirts designed to symbolize Southern heritage and honoring the Confederate flag have become very popular among teenagers, and the fact that the Confederate flag has always been associated with being a Rebel adds extra appeal to students at Zion Chapel.

With more than one company producing these type t-shirts, consumers are open to many different designs, and some name

brands are considered more tasteful than others.

According to Coffee County Schools Superintendent Dr. Linda Ingram, many students started wearing these type t-shirts last year as well as waving large Confederate flags from their vehicles. Over time this had become a problem in the schools, and she said the faculty asked principal Jerry Barnes to address the situation. His response came as a warning to students early last week that shirts deemed offensive and containing the Rebel flag would not be allowed.

Ingram said the policy has always been to ask students wearing offensive shirts to turn them out for the remainder of the school day or take it off if the student had another shirt.

Ingram said none of the shirts involved in last week's situation were Zion Chapel Rebel shirts, and students were only sent home after refusing to turn their shirt inside out. She said students were allowed to come back to school after changing.

"The situation was not nearly as controversial as some made it out to be," Ingram said. "I would say there was less than 10 children in the entire week that got in trouble."

And, she said the issue was

Please See REBEL, Page 8



**LAND ALMOST CLEARED** and the local dog pound on its last legs as the City of Elba prepares to move out and make room for Elba's newest industry, Toledo Molding and Die, which will occupy a 40 acre site off the 203 Bypass and adjoining Elba's Carl Folsom Airport. The firm hopes to be in the building by the end of the year and in production by late January or early February in the 92,000 square foot building and plans to have over 100 employees soon after startup of auto parts production. The firm doing the site preparation plans to remove as much as seven feet of dirt in some areas, replacing it with other compacted more soil to ensure a strong foundation under the building. The dog pound will be relocated across from the work release center, according to Mayor James Grimes.

During Coffee County Commission meeting

## County revenue commissioner and probate judge address governor's proposed tax plan

by Linda Hodge, Editor

The revenue commissioner also gave a comparison on how the plan will effect taxes on a house valued at \$100,000.

Like the acreage example, he said the millage rate will decrease from 6.5 mills to 3.5 mills, but again, the assessment ratio will increase from 10 percent to 100 percent.

With these changes, the state tax will go from the current amount of \$39 to

\$175 if the proposed plan is passed. That will be a difference of \$136 or a 350 percent increase in state tax.

Burns also said the county assessment value will remain the same, therefore, the increase in taxes will strictly be a state increase.

He said these figures represent a normal homestead, and those over 65 will still be exempt if their income qualifies them for the exemption.

Although Burns said he supports the governor, he said he can not support this proposed tax plan because of the too much, too quick reasoning along with no one being able to fully explain all the aspects of the proposed tax plan.

"This bill is a very complicated, very long bill," Burns said. "I would be very afraid to vote for something they can't explain

wholly to you."

Probate Judge William Gammill said the governor's proposed tax plan will effect taxpayers in three different ways through probate office transactions.

He said casual sales tax will increase 1/2 percent on the sale of all vehicles and boats. Currently, the state sales tax is 2 percent.

Gammill said this will equate to an increase of \$50 per each \$10,000 of purchase price of all vehicles and boats.

Through the proposed plan, he said the ad valorem tax on vehicles will experience an increase of a four year period.

Currently, private owned vehicles are taxed for ad valorem taxes based on 15 percent of the assessed value multiplied by a 6.5 millage rate. Over a four year period, Gammill said the proposed tax plan will gradually increase the assessment ratio from 15 percent to 100 percent. The millage rate will decrease from the present 6.5 mills to 3.5 mills.

Gammill used an example of a taxpayer owning a vehicle valued at \$20,000.

The current tax on this vehicle assessed at 15 percent with 6.5 mills equates to \$19.50. If the tax bill passes, the changes will be implemented as follows for the vehicle valued at \$20,000:

• Jan. 2004 the assessed value will be at 45 percent multiplied by a 3.5 millage rate which equates to \$31.50. This is a \$12 difference from the current tax rate.

• Jan. 2005 the assessed value will be at 63 percent multiplied by a 3.5 millage rate which equates to \$44.10. This is a \$24.60 difference from the current tax rate.

• Jan. 2006 the assessed value will be at 81 percent multiplied by a 3.5 millage rate which equates to \$56.70. This is a \$37.70 difference from the current tax rate.

• Jan. 2007 the assessed value will be at 100 percent multiplied by a 3.5 millage rate which equates to \$70. This is a \$50.50 difference from the current tax rate.

Overall, the proposed tax plan will implement a 260 percent tax increase for ad valorem tax.

Please See TOWN, Page 2

## Area Happenings

**THE SOUTHEAST ALABAMA BEEKEEPERS ASSOCIATION** will hold its monthly meeting Thursday, Aug. 14, at the Coffee County Farm Center. For more information, please call Elizabeth Whitlock at (334) 894-2077 or Charles Jeter at (334) 306-2734.

**NEW BROCKTON HUNTER SCHOOL** will hold an Open House Thursday, Aug. 14, from 4-6 p.m. All parents are invited to come and meet the teachers.

**THE ELBA HIGH SCHOOL BAND BOOSTERS CLUB** will hold an organizational meeting Monday, Aug. 18, at 7 p.m., in the high school band room.

**THE THIRD ANNUAL "TIGER WITHIN CLASSIC"** will be held Thursday, Aug. 21, at Miller Memorial Stadium in Elba. The Elba Tigers will take on the Tuscaloosa Tigers in this exhibition match. Tickets are \$5.00.

**NEW SEASONS STEAK HOUSE** will sponsor Elba's 50th Anniversary Celebration, Sept. 6, at the Elba Recreation Center. Tickets for the event are \$10.00 and can be purchased at the Elba Chamber of Commerce or Diner's Hair and Nail Salon.



**OWNERSHIP CHANGES...** Subway of Elba, located at 1698 Hickman Avenue, held a grand opening celebration Monday, Aug. 11, as the business celebrated its new ownership. The restaurant recently came under the ownership of Mike Hall, and many local citizens visited the sandwich eatery to welcome his new management team to Elba's food industry. Helping the business celebrate its grand opening was the Elba Chamber of Commerce which hosted a ribbon cutting ceremony at 11 a.m. Monday morning. Those present for the ribbon cutting ceremony included (from left): Sam Cooper, Kaye Whitworth - executive director of the Elba Chamber of Commerce, Junior Miss Elba Cameron Irwin, Kenneth Calhoun, Barry Giles, Tonya Jones, James Barnes, Theresa Chandler - manager, Future Little Miss Elba Annisley Padgett, Ramona Grantham, Elba City Clerk Wayne Grantham - filling in for Elba Mayor James Grimes, Steve Cox, Rene Lambert, Brandi DeSandro, Doris Matthews, Herby McCall, Jesse Kelley and Miss Elba Anna Anderson.



## BRAINSTORMS

With Ferrin Cox

Americans all complain when politicians are caught digging in the tax coffers for special "back home" projects. That is unless we are the back home folks getting the vital pork projects. This week we received a news release announcing that Alabama's own Senator Richard Shelby had been named "Porker of the Month for August '03". Our initial reaction was that someone was fussing because of all his good work in getting much needed grants for "us" in Alabama. Well this one is a little different. Apparently our senior senator is delaying a bill to cut tariffs on certain goods... more particularly knit-to-shape socks from some Caribbean countries. According to the Citizens Against Government Waste, Shelby is upset because this new "great free trade bill" could cost 10,000 Alabama citizens their jobs. Shelby is pushing to have these imported socks exempted from the free trade/import tax exemption category. Somehow or another these folks feel justified in being mad when our main man for trying to protect a whole bunch of American manufacturing jobs. There are thousands of unemployed textile workers in this country who wish he and a lot of others had taking this strong stand years ago.

More and more often we are hearing louder and louder rumblings that Chief Justice Roy Moore is copying the antics of Alabama's civil rights era politicians with his threats of defiance of federal court orders in the Ten Commandments monument matter. The private comments are also that his battle is just as futile as those politicians of yesteryear who shouted "segregation today, segregation tomorrow and segregation forever". The complainers are for the most part not opposed to the Ten Commandments monument but embarrassed that our judge of all judges is apparently openly defying the law of the land and maybe even openly daring the courts to challenge him. All this with the cash strapped people of Alabama footing the mounting bills for the ongoing battle. A good measure of putting the issue in proper perspective was recently suggested. That would be to watch the reaction of the avid Moore supporters: if a Muslim or Hindu monument or maybe a statue of Buddha, the enlightened one, were placed in the same judicial building rotunda. After all, it is about our F-R-E-E-D-O-M-S. Therefore we should show we can practice it. Actually under the current ongoing court rulings, we would be forced to let any, absolutely any, group place their religious symbols, regardless of how radical or far out on display in the building, if we are to leave the Ten Commandments monument. Personally we are not about to be willingly led into that trap. "Bow to the rulings of the courts judge, you have made your point and made it nationally."

We were at first concerned when Governor Riley announced the new nominees for the Auburn Board of Trustees. One, Dwight Carlisle is a member of the executive branch of state government (Revenue Commissioner) so removing two legislators from the Trustees didn't "add diversity", just different folks. Now we hear he must resign from the state job if approved as an Auburn Trustee by the legislature and we accept this. From all we hear, Carlisle is a capable person and will do well at whatever job he accepts. Now he needs to get away from state government completely for Auburn to truly realize the real diversity Governor Riley was after.

**Last Chance for Beach Photos this Year!**



English Photography will be running a special **Beach Photo Promotion** during Labor Day weekend. Schedule an appointment for yourself, your children, or your whole family for what is sure to be the most unique portrait experience of your life. Appointments are limited, so call today! **(And be sure to tell your friends!)**

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**Bridal Registry**  
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Shower: 7/27/03 Wedding: 9/27/03  
Anna Head & Rex Oggs  
Shower: 9/7/03 Wedding: 10/11/03  
Michelle Lewis & Ralph Utz  
Shower: August 24 Wedding: 10/25/03

**Briar Patch**  
Garden & Gift Shoppe  
On the Square - Downtown Elba  
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Coffee County & Surrounding Counties - \$19 per year  
6 months - \$10, including city & state tax  
Alabama Counties - \$21 per year - including tax  
6 months - \$11  
Outside Alabama - \$24 per year - 6 months - \$13

## EDITORIAL

### From Last Week...Red clay turns out not to be vandalism

by Linda Hodge, Editor

In a bit of good news, the picture in last week's paper concerning vandalism at the Evergreen Cemetery turned out not to be vandalism after all. Soon after the picture appeared in the paper showing red clay atop one of the monuments in the cemetery, we were

#### REMINDER

The City of Elba, Elba Chamber of Commerce and Sesquicentennial Committee will continue the celebration of Elba's 150th Anniversary on Saturday, Aug. 23, with a concert featuring legendary country music artist George Jones at Miller Memorial Stadium in Elba. Gates will open at 5 p.m.

The opening act beginning at 6:30 p.m. will feature Elba's own Rob Hudson, and the "Possums" will take center stage at 8 p.m.

Tickets remain on sale at the Elba Chamber of Commerce (on field and in stands) or general admission.

For more information, call the Elba Chamber of Commerce at 897-3125.

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notified of the exact purpose for the red clay.

Apparently, a hydraulic hose from a piece of machinery being used in the cemetery burst and oil from the hose got on the monument. Since there is no good way to clean hydraulic oil, the suggested way to place red clay on it. The clay supposedly absorbs the oil.

Looking back at this mistake, it was one we were glad to make.

First and foremost, it revealed an assurance that those of us with loved ones buried in the Evergreen Cemetery can rest easy knowing our mothers, fathers, brothers, sisters, etc. are in a place that is well kept and looked after by the City of Elba and Elba Recreation Department.

The recreation folks first found this suspicious spot, and asked of what happened in the school. They were asked for our help in preventing it from happening again before cleaning the area.

This quick reaction and concern from the department helped assure better communication in the future.

Since publishing the picture, we have been told the company which placed the clay on the monument said they would be sure to inform the city and/or recreation department of these procedures beforehand in the future.

### Elba Police Report

The Elba Police Department, beginning Monday, Aug. 4, 2003, investigated the following incidents: one theft of property, one criminal mischief, one harassing communications, one attempted burglary, one domestic violence, one hit and run, one trespassing, one accident, one criminal trespassing, one stalking, one robbery and two for harassment.

The following arrests were made: one for domestic violence, one for possession of marijuana and one for harassment.

Traffic citations issued during the week were as follows: one for a suspended driver's license, one for a revoked driver's license, three for not wearing a seat belt, three for speeding, one for failure to use a turn signal, one for no proof of insurance, one for not using a child restraint safety system and one for running a stop sign.

Daily activity highlights for the week were as follows:

MONDAY, AUGUST 4 - River stage - 8.31 feet (6:17 a.m.); Disturbance reported at 318 Smith Ave. (8:42 a.m.); Coffee County EMS dispatched to 1157 N. Morrow (12:03 p.m.); Coffee County EMS dispatched to 1157 N. Morrow (1:36 p.m.); Attempted burglary at a business on Factory Street (2:34 p.m.); Possible domestic disturbance reported at 14232 Hwy. 87 S (10:46 p.m.).

TUESDAY, AUGUST 5 - Wreck with a drive-off reported at Mr. Henry's (1:34 a.m.); River stage - 7.66 feet (6:10 a.m.); Fight in progress reported at 1320 Jones St. (8:45 p.m.); Wreck (vehicle vs. gas pump) reported at Big/Little West (9:22 p.m.).

WEDNESDAY, AUGUST 6 - Coffee County EMS dispatched to Regency Apartments (12:19 a.m.); River stage - 10.82 feet (6:11 a.m.); Routine activity.

THURSDAY, AUGUST 7 - River stage - 12.98 feet (6:01 a.m.); Prowler reported at 788 County Rd. 401 (11:12 p.m.); Prowler reported at 824 First Ave. (11:37 p.m.).

FRIDAY, AUGUST 8 - River stage - 14.99 feet (6:21 a.m.); Routine activity.

SATURDAY, AUGUST 9 - River stage - 14.65 feet (6:13 a.m.); Alarm activated at 1826 Woodland Dr. (11:08 a.m.); Routine activity.

SUNDAY, AUGUST 10 - River stage - 12.14 feet (6:16 a.m.); Alarm activated at 996 Alabama Hwy. 203 (11:24 a.m.); Disturbance reported at 329 Brunson Circle (7:38 p.m.); Disturbance reported at 625 Reynolds St. (8:27 p.m.).

MONDAY, AUGUST 11 - River stage - 12.14 feet (6:16 a.m.); Alarm activated at 996 Alabama Hwy. 203 (11:24 a.m.); Disturbance reported at 329 Brunson Circle (7:38 p.m.); Disturbance reported at 625 Reynolds St. (8:27 p.m.).

TUESDAY, AUGUST 12 - River stage - 12.14 feet (6:16 a.m.); Alarm activated at 996 Alabama Hwy. 203 (11:24 a.m.); Disturbance reported at 329 Brunson Circle (7:38 p.m.); Disturbance reported at 625 Reynolds St. (8:27 p.m.).

WEDNESDAY, AUGUST 13 - River stage - 12.14 feet (6:16 a.m.); Alarm activated at 996 Alabama Hwy. 203 (11:24 a.m.); Disturbance reported at 329 Brunson Circle (7:38 p.m.); Disturbance reported at 625 Reynolds St. (8:27 p.m.).

THURSDAY, AUGUST 14 - River stage - 12.14 feet (6:16 a.m.); Alarm activated at 996 Alabama Hwy. 203 (11:24 a.m.); Disturbance reported at 329 Brunson Circle (7:38 p.m.); Disturbance reported at 625 Reynolds St. (8:27 p.m.).

FRIDAY, AUGUST 15 - River stage - 12.14 feet (6:16 a.m.); Alarm activated at 996 Alabama Hwy. 203 (11:24 a.m.); Disturbance reported at 329 Brunson Circle (7:38 p.m.); Disturbance reported at 625 Reynolds St. (8:27 p.m.).

SATURDAY, AUGUST 16 - River stage - 12.14 feet (6:16 a.m.); Alarm activated at 996 Alabama Hwy. 203 (11:24 a.m.); Disturbance reported at 329 Brunson Circle (7:38 p.m.); Disturbance reported at 625 Reynolds St. (8:27 p.m.).

SUNDAY, AUGUST 17 - River stage - 12.14 feet (6:16 a.m.); Alarm activated at 996 Alabama Hwy. 203 (11:24 a.m.); Disturbance reported at 329 Brunson Circle (7:38 p.m.); Disturbance reported at 625 Reynolds St. (8:27 p.m.).

MONDAY, AUGUST 18 - River stage - 12.14 feet (6:16 a.m.); Alarm activated at 996 Alabama Hwy. 203 (11:24 a.m.); Disturbance reported at 329 Brunson Circle (7:38 p.m.); Disturbance reported at 625 Reynolds St. (8:27 p.m.).

TUESDAY, AUGUST 19 - River stage - 12.14 feet (6:16 a.m.); Alarm activated at 996 Alabama Hwy. 203 (11:24 a.m.); Disturbance reported at 329 Brunson Circle (7:38 p.m.); Disturbance reported at 625 Reynolds St. (8:27 p.m.).

WEDNESDAY, AUGUST 20 - River stage - 12.14 feet (6:16 a.m.); Alarm activated at 996 Alabama Hwy. 203 (11:24 a.m.); Disturbance reported at 329 Brunson Circle (7:38 p.m.); Disturbance reported at 625 Reynolds St. (8:27 p.m.).

#### Dear Coffee County Residents,

Coffee County Arts Alliance has reached a milestone in its history this year. We will begin our 30th season of performances at the end of August.

Thirty years of bringing the arts to our community on a small budget with all volunteer help. The remarkable thing about this feat is that the Arts Alliance is not only still surviving in this time of decreased government spending on the arts, but we are growing. This is due mainly to the support of our community.

Eighty-five percent of our budget comes from membership and donations. It is so rewarding to work hard for something and realize that the community is behind you and understands the importance of what this organization does. Community support is what has allowed us to grow, and growth is one thing we have accomplished.

Since I started on this board in 1985, I have watched our performance budget double, our membership steadily increase and our involvement in the schools grow. I have sat in meetings with other arts organization members from around the county and listened to them worry about decreasing memberships and the lack of support they find in their communities and schools. This is not the case in Coffee County, and I am quick to realize how lucky we are in this community.

The business community has embraced the arts, as well as individuals. Thank you for all the support you give Coffee County Arts Alliance. The Board of Directors strives to bring you an excellent return on your investment, and I think you'll find this season will bring some wonderful events to our community.

I have to mention our pre-season performance on August 17, 2:30 p.m. at St. Luke United Methodist Church. First, because it is FREE. Second, because it features a Coffee County resident and most importantly, because it promises to be a very exciting performance.

CCAA will present The Belle of Amherst, by William Luce, a one-woman play based on the writings of Emily Dickinson featuring Margaret Byrd Wingate as Emily Dickinson. The play is directed by John B. Logan III, another Coffee County resident. Both Logan and Wingate are instructors at Enterprise High School. Margaret's love of the theater began in high school, right here at Enterprise High and has grown over the years as she continued to work with various theater groups, including the Alabama Shakespeare Festival. CCAA started a tradition of bringing local talent to the forefront several years ago, and we are very proud to be presenting this wonderful production this year.

The free pre-season performance is a way for us to give something back to the community and thank them for all the support they give us as well as showcase the talent we have right here in our community. Thank you for helping us to present another great year. See you at the performance!

Suzanne L. Sawyer, President  
Coffee County Arts Alliance

CCC (Continued from Page One)

On vehicles... Gammill said the proposed tax plan will effect recording fees as the cost for recording a deed will go from 50 cents per \$500 to \$1 per \$500 of value. Also, he said mortgage tax will go from 15 cents per \$100 to 30 cents per \$100.

While speaking, Gammill took the opportunity inform county residents of a new probate office web page which he said will be a good way for individuals to get more in depth information concerning the bills which make up the governor's tax package. He said there are 19 bills which make up the tax package, and the breakdown used on this website is a good explanatory one.

Also, Gammill said this website is full of information about all aspects of the probate office and includes a question and answer forum. To access the website, go to [www.probateoffice.info](http://www.probateoffice.info). To view the tax package information: click on general information; then click on what's new; then click on Governor Riley's Tax Plan.

\* Awarded the steel pipe bid to Gulf Atlantic Culvert, Inc. of Tallahassee, Fla. This company provided the low bid at \$10,987.80.

\* Approved a motion made by Commissioner Linda Westbrook to give the Town of Westbrook \$2,000 to help it raise matching fund monies for already approved grants. Westbrook said the town has three improvement grants already approved and is currently holding fundraisers to acquire the town's matching part of the grants. She said the money given by the commission will assist the town with its sidewalk improvement grant.

\* Approved a motion made by Commissioner Jessie Lewis to appoint Joseph McCollough to the E-911 board. McCollough will serve a four year term on this board.

\* I want to thank the school principal, superintendent, and Board of Education. They have shown me they care more about a parent's "who you are" status in the community than they do for a student's education. (Mr. Williams was the exception to this). I thank them for forcing me to remove my son from the school system.

\* Our money will no longer be spent in the City of Elba to support a school system that operates as this one does. The money I spend in Elba will not make or break the School System in tax revenue. But maybe other parents that want their children to have a good education will do what I have done. I hope they will move their children to a school that puts the student first. Thank you for taking time to read this.

Sincerely,  
Belinda Holloway Gunter

Ed Note: Elba School Superintendent Danny Weeks responded Monday in a phone call to allegations made by Mrs. Gunter. He explained that it is school policy not to transfer a student from one class to another unless the parent or teacher can offer valid reasons for the

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## LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Dear Editor,

I would like to bring to everyone's attention an act of discrimination that recently occurred in the Elba City School system. I made a request to the principal of the Elementary School that I move my son out of one classroom and place him in another classroom. I had already learned that someone else's child had been moved at a parent's request by the principal. The reason I wanted my son moved is because I did not believe that he would be able to get the best possible education in the classroom he was assigned to. So I made the request that the principal move him to another classroom.

The principal flatly refused saying he would not move my son under any circumstances. He would not give me a reason for his refusal. He denied any knowledge of other children being moved to other classrooms. This was in spite of the fact that the other child and his mother told me personally that the other child had been moved. If the principal had no knowledge of what happened in the school then perhaps his management skills are lacking. Maybe a more capable person should step in and run the Elementary School properly.

After that I went to the Superintendent of the City Board of Education. The superintendent refused to help me saying the board was already mad at him. He said he would not make the principal move any child to another class claiming that all teachers were equally qualified. If this is true then why did other parents have their children moved to other classrooms?

After the Superintendent refused to help me I called the City Board of Education. Some of them said initially that they were willing to help me but on the following day they changed their position and refused to intervene for me. One member of the Board, Mr. Aubrey Williams expressed a sincere interest in helping me. Mr. Williams told me that he could not understand why one child would be moved out of a classroom and another could not. I would like to publicly thank Mr. Williams for his genuine interest and concern for my problem. He does not seem to care for the "Who you are" games that are being played in the school system. I believe that he is the only Board member that truly cares for the students in the Elba City School System.

I also called the State Board of Education in Montgomery to ask for help. They also refused to come to my aid. Why should our tax dollars continue to support their expensive salaries if they won't do anything about situations like this?

Miss Editor I am not someone ranked high in the social economic scale in this community. I believe that he is the only Board member that truly cares for the students in the Elba City School System.

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# LIFESTYLES



# SPORTS

## Views from.... THE PRESSBOX

By Ricky Mulaz, Sports Editor

Having to get up early to take a shower and get dressed for school has certainly solved the problem of getting Melanie to go to bed on time during the week. Back during the summer there were very few nights that I didn't hear her up moving around after I went to bed, but lately she has been in bed asleep before I even turned off the TV in the den. She still stays in on the weekends, but Dad likes to do that himself and I can't gripe.

### FOR WHAT IT IS WORTH....

\*\*\*The Elba Tigers had to be hosed off outside the dressing room after going outside to practice last Thursday and Coach Mike Waters reported that the rainy weather has played havoc with practice and the condition of the fields at the school. The Thursday practice ate up huge chunks of turf on the Tigers practice field, and Waters said it may be weeks before his team can pay a visit to Tiger Stadium to get in some much needed kicking work. This may be the year that coaches go back and dig out those long cleats that were so visible years ago.

\*\*\*I read in a daily paper that Coach Leavy Boutwell and his Northview Cougars headed back into the dressing room after only twenty minutes of work on the opening day of preseason practice. The report said his players -- "not back in for some 'soul searching,'" but did quote Coach Boutwell after practice and the former Elba player and coach said his team picked up the pace and did well on opening day. Coach Boutwell may have some tough days ahead as he tries to lead the Cougars back after two winless seasons, but none tougher than his players.

\*\*\*The Birmingham News listed its annual "Academic All-State" teams over the summer and included on the honored list were five student-athletes from Elba High School. Goffer Colby Capps headed the list with a 4.0 grade point average, followed by Bart Barnes (golf and basketball) 3.90, Samantha Williams (softball) 3.90, Ben Dye (golf) 3.90 and Brandon Petty (football and baseball) 3.80. It was great to see that the student-athletes at Elba High really are students, first.

\*\*\*The Alabama High School Athletic Association had an article on its web site last week concerning nicknames of its member schools. The most popular nickname was Tigers, with 49 schools using the Tiger as its mascot and nickname, and it was followed by Bulldogs (32), Wildcats (26), Panthers (26) and Eagles (24). This season the Elba Tigers will battle four sets of Bulldogs, four sets of Tigers, one Lion and one Eagle.

\*\*\*Coaches are working on next season's football schedules even before this season gets started, and the big news over in Covington County is the report that Straughn and Andalusia will play on the opening week of the season in both 2004 and 2005. Some fans think the rivalry will be even bigger than Andalusia's long running clash against Opp, and word is that the game will be played each year on Thursday to insure a huge crowd. Sounds like a winner to me.

\*\*\*In closing, I write sports and put together my sports pages on Sundays, and that means I am a little behind schedule this week due to the power outage across town on Sunday morning. I joked last week that the Water and Electric Department needed to provide its users with new bedside clocks that reset automatically when the power goes off, especially since the outages have been so common this summer. My old clock has been reset so often that now I just shake it until the time is close to being right. Oh well, as long as we get to work and school on time I guess that is all that matters.

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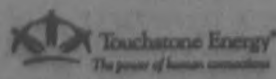
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With L.B.W. Community College

## Kyle English signs baseball scholarship

Former Elba Tiger standout Kyle English ended months of speculation about which sport he would play in college last week when he signed a baseball scholarship with L.B. Wallace Community College, in Andalusia.

English, a three-sport athlete at Elba High, was recruited in football, basketball and baseball, and recently it was reported that he had verbally committed to play basketball at Faulkner Community College, in Bay Minette. Last week's signing put an end to the speculation; however, as on Friday, Aug. 8, English officially became a L.B.W. Saint.

"I like to play all three sports and always hoped I would play basketball one day at the college level," stated English, "but after weighing the options I thought it would be best to stay close to home and when L.B.W. offered me a baseball scholarship I jumped at the opportunity. L.B.W. has a very rich tradition in baseball and has probably the state's top junior college coach in Steve Helms. Coach Helms is successful and his players seem to move on to four-year schools after they complete their careers at L.B.W., and that was a combination that I just had to take advantage of. I know it will be tough at the junior college level and it will take a lot of hard work on my part to earn playing time, but I came here to play baseball and I will do whatever it takes to play. I am looking forward to the challenge and the opportunity to be a member of such an outstanding program."

English was a starter for the Elba Tiger baseball team since his freshman year, and batted over .400 in both his junior and senior seasons as a short-stop and pitcher. He led the team in steals as a junior and in RBI's as a senior, and was a valuable member of the Tigers' state playoff teams both years.

"Kyle was definitely one of the most versatile athletes I've ever come through Elba High," said Coach Helms, "and he was a senior, and was a valuable member of the Tigers' state playoff teams both years."

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## Break in weather allows area teams to hit practice fields

The high school football season is now only two weeks away, and that means that the teams in the area are hard at work every afternoon in preparation for the upcoming season openers. Following is a recap of last week's practice sessions at the schools in the area:

### ELBA TIGERS

The Elba Tigers managed to dodge the rain drops long enough to get in two good days of hitting on the practice field last week and Coach Mike Waters is hoping the sun will come out and allow his team to get in some much needed work.

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Elba Tiger three-sport athlete Kyle English made his decision to continue his career in baseball last week by signing a baseball scholarship with L.B. Wallace Community College, in Andalusia. Pictured at the signing are (seated, l-r) Patsy English, Kyle English, Ken English, (standing, l-r) LBW coach Steve Helms and Elba Tiger coach Wynn Grimes.

School," said Elba baseball coach Wynn Grimes. "There is no doubt he has the talent to succeed at any sport at the college level, and now that he has chosen to play baseball, there is no doubt he will improve very quickly and make giant strides in the sport. Back in high school he was always competing in one sport or the other. Now he can concentrate on one sport, and I expect him to be an excellent college baseball player. I know he has the talent and the dedication to excel, and look forward to following him during his days over in Andalusia."

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# SPORTS

## Elba Tigers return to compete in Class 3A, Region 1 against state's top prep teams

When the Elba Tigers kick off the 2003 high school football season in two weeks they will once again find themselves competing in what many prep sports writers call the state's toughest region, regardless of classification.

The Tigers will compete in Class 3A, Region 1, a region that last season saw its third place finisher win the state championship.

"There is absolutely no doubt that this region is the toughest in the state," said Elba's Coach Mike Waters, "and once again this season there are at least four teams that honestly believe they win the state championship. T.R. Miller will be the defending state champion in Class 3A, while Pike County felt it should have won the title last year and the Tigers' first year in the 3A ranks, and the Tigers and their fans are expecting even better days ahead this season. The Tigers handed eventual state champion T.R. Miller one of its three losses last season, but this season Straughn must travel to both Brewton and Brundidge, which will make the road to the playoffs a little more bumpy. The Tigers return many of their skill players from last year's team, however, and have a big physical line that will lead the way. One thing for certain is that Straughn will fear no team on its schedule."

\*\*\*Straughn posted a 5-2 record last season in the Tigers' first year in the 3A ranks, and the Tigers and their fans are expecting even better days ahead this season. The Tigers handed eventual state champion T.R. Miller one of its three losses last season, but this season Straughn must travel to both Brewton and Brundidge, which will make the road to the playoffs a little more bumpy. The Tigers return many of their skill players from last year's team, however, and have a big physical line that will lead the way. One thing for certain is that Straughn will fear no team on its schedule."

\*\*\*Clarke County made it to the playoffs with a 4-3 record state a year ago, and even though the Bulldogs lost 19 seniors and Coach Duane Davis, their head coach for 13 years, the "Dogs are confident once again that they will be a force on the 3A level. One reason for the confidence is the return of offensive tackle B.J. Stabler, rated as the state's top line prospect at 6-5, 290. Clarke County is expected to be a run oriented team this season, with Stabler leading the way, and if the Bulldogs can survive a week #3 home showdown against T.R. Miller, the "Dogs could indeed be a team to watch."

\*\*\*W.S. Neal missed out on a tie-breaker last season and missed making the playoffs despite a 4-3 region record, but the Eagles are looking to soar under the leadership of new head coach Shane Smothers and should have the players to make that ride one that will be fun to watch. The Eagles will have speed to burn with a veteran backfield returning, and Coach Smothers is known as an offensive minded coach, which Neal fans are hoping will result in high-scoring wins on the field. W.S. Neal has been the most under-achieving team in the region for years, but this could be the year the Eagles finally take off."

\*\*\*Elba struggled to a 2-5 record last season and missed the playoffs, and the Tigers of Coach Mike Waters might have their hands full once again in their final season as a 3A team. The Tigers will return players with both size and strength up front in the offensive line, but Elba was wiped out in the backfield due to graduation and academic problems, and the Tiger offense could struggle early. The defense should be solid and will be led by linebacker Ralston Moore (6-3, 215) and tackle Jessie

While the Eagles may be a little short on talent this season, the school seems with pride in all sports, and one thing that can be certain is that Pleasant Home will play to win on each and every Friday night.

\*\*\*Cottonwood caught fire late to close out the region with a 4-3 mark and then stunned many football fans by winning two playoff games and advancing to the third round of the post-season party. This year the Bears are brimming with confidence and veteran coach Willard Whitcomb is expecting his team to start the season like it ended last season and is looking for his Bears to battle for the region title. A season opening date with Rehoboth will give Cottonwood fans an early preview of just what this team can do, while a week two visit



# COMMUNITY NEWS

## Elba teachers help Kid's College students build go-cart

Bruce Sasser and Larry Goodson, teachers from Elba High School, participated in Kid's College this summer at Lurleen B. Wallace Community College, MacArthur campus. Sasser and Goodson taught the Ready, Set, Go-Cart class, and the students in the class constructed a go-cart from scratch. From welding and painting to airing up the tires, the kids did it all. After the go-cart was complete, students raced the cart around a track on the MacArthur campus. Goodson is shown below.



Ready, Set, Go-Cart students



## Elba Elementary School Menu

Aug. 18 - 22, 2003

### BREAKFAST

**Monday:** Cinnamon Toast, Cheese, Cereal, Juice, Milk  
**Tuesday:** Waffles/Syrup, Sausage, Cereal, Juice, Milk  
**Wednesday:** Biscuit & Jelly, Sausage, Patty, Cereal, Juice, Milk  
**Thursday:** Pop Tart, Cheese, Cereal, Juice, Milk  
**Friday:** Cheese Grits, Toast & Jelly, Cereal, Juice, Milk

### LUNCH

**Monday:** Pizza, Green Salad, Potato Rounds, Applesauce, Milk  
**Tuesday:** Steak Sandwich, Mashed Potatoes, Black-eye Peas, Sliced Peaches, Milk  
**Wednesday:** Chili w/ Beans, Mixed Vegetables, Cheese Sandwich, Crackers, 1/2 Orange, Milk  
**Thursday:** Burrito w/ Cheese, Rice, Red Beans, 1/2 Apple, Milk  
**Friday:** Hoagie, French Fries, Lettuce, Tomato, Dill Pickles, Cookie, Milk

Group Photo  
Aug. 23 in Elba

## REBEL

(Continued from Page One)

## Gov. Riley to speak at Troy State

Governor Bob Riley will be the keynote speaker at a "tax reform, and accountability rally" scheduled for Tuesday, Aug. 26, 10 a.m., at Trojan Arena on the Troy State University campus.

The public is invited to attend the rally to learn more about Governor Riley's plan, which is scheduled to go before the voters in a referendum on Sept. 9. In addition to Governor Riley's address, the rally will include comments

from Dr. Jack Hawkins Jr., Chancellor of Troy State University; Jimmy Lunsford, Mayor of Troy; Larry Blakeney, TSU's head football coach; and Gordon Stone, executive director of the Higher Education Partnership.

The rally will also include music from the TSU "Sound of the South" marching band and area high school bands. There will also be refreshments served after the rally.

never about the school mascot or changing it.

On Sunday, Barnes held a meeting with several parents and representatives of organizations such as the band boosters, athletic boosters and PTO. The end result was a compromise that school officials will look at each shirt individually to decide if it is considered offensive or not.

Monday afternoon of this week, Ingram said everyone seemed satisfied with the compromise and no problems had occurred that day.

In conclusion, she said the education of children should come first, and in that, the school system wants to be as culturally sound as it can be to all students.

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FALL REGISTRATION  
AUGUST 21 & 22

# Wallace Community College

Wallace Community College

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FOCUSED  
FACTS

## ALL THAT GLITTERS...

Skookum Jim, his nephew Tagish Charlie, and Jim's brother-in-law George Carmack spent their summers hunting and fishing. Roaming across Alaska and the Canadian Yukon, they needed to find and preserve enough food to feed themselves and their families during the brutal Arctic winters.

In late July 1896, the trio were camped near the junction of the Yukon and Klondike Rivers. One afternoon, while tracking a moose, Tagish Charlie happened upon a

nugget glistening in the sunlight. Racing back to camp he told the others. They insisted the sun, water, and rocks had combined to play a trick on his eyes.

Certain he had found gold, Charlie finally convinced the others to accompany him back to Rabbit Creek. It took him three weeks, but on August 16, 1896 Skookum Jim and George Carmack discovered that Rabbit Creek really was filled with gold nuggets. The next day, each of them filed a claim in nearby Dawson City. The Klondike Gold Rush was on.

Prospectors from across the north raced to the newly renamed Bonanza Creek. As winter comes early in the north, news of the strike didn't reach the rest of North America until after the ice thawed in the spring of 1897.

Several newly wealthy prospectors sailed from Skagway, Alaska on the SS Portland, arriving in the Pacific Northwest city of Seattle on July 17th. With them, they brought three tons of gold. Like a thunderbolt, news of a Klondike gold strike struck Seattle. Faster than a prairie wildfire, it flashed across the country, and by early fall nearly 100,000 people were racing to the Klondike.

Most sailed to Skagway, where they faced a 600-mile trip to reach the gold fields. Some

never made it. Others, arriving in the spring of 1898 found the best claims already taken.

In eighteen months, it was over. Overnight, Dawson City grew from a few hundred to a hundred thousand;



then shrank to a few thousand just as quickly. Seattle, as the Gateway to the North enjoyed a prosperity it hadn't seen for years. To find out more, take this weeks Web Journey.

## The Web Journey

### Klondike Gold Rush: The Perilous Journey North

A resource that includes maps of various routes used to reach the Klondike, photographs of the trials and barriers faced by the thousands of people trying to reach the gold fields,

and explanatory articles about the gold rush and its impact on the participants. Originally created for a 1997 exhibition at the University of Washington Library, these selections subsequently became part of their permanent Internet based collection. Web address: <http://www.lib.washington.edu/special/Coll/Klondike/>.

### Stories From The Gold Rush

Prepared and mounted by the Smithsonian Institution's Postal Museum, this resource includes stories and pictures about the men and women who made up the gold rush are included. Also included is a section on gold rush literature that discusses the roles played by Jack London and Robert W. Service. Internet Address: <http://www.postalmuseum.si.edu/gold/gold2.html>.

Articles and information in The Eye Zone do not necessarily reflect the opinions of the sponsor or this newspaper.



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# COMMUNITY NEWS

## Mizell Memorial Hospital begins reconstruction project

The first step in a major two-phase renovation project is underway at Mizell Memorial Hospital in Opp.

"We're preparing for the creation of a new same-day surgery section of the hospital in the first-floor area formerly used for the maternity department," he said. "Once that is complete, we'll move into the second phase of the project and completely renovate the admissions and emergency department areas."

The first step, however, was to create additional parking spaces to replace those lost during the construction project.

"We've removed some trees in the front of the hospital and are in the process of creating more parking spaces there for patients and visitors," said hos-

pital CEO Allen Foster. "These parking spaces have been needed for a while, and when construction is complete, the community will enjoy ample parking for our hospital services."

When the same-day surgery area is renovated, patients will notice an improved process of admission, treatment and release procedures, he said.

"We'll have a canopied drive so patients can be delivered right to the door. Then registration, recovery and discharge will all take place in that department. Patients will no longer have to go to different areas of the hospital for these various steps," he said.

Once the admissions and emergency room departments are renovated, the flow of traffic

will be greatly enhanced, he said.

"We'll have an expanded admissions area to enhance the privacy of patients. The renovated emergency services area will also protect the privacy of patients and will allow a better flow of traffic. Rescue squad vehicles will be able to back up to an unloading area for quicker entry into the ER."

The entire two-phase project is expected to take approximately 18 months to complete.

"As with all services we provide, we are constantly seeking ways to improve and provide the community with the highest quality healthcare possible. This project will enhance patient care by creating a more functional area for same-day surgery and by creating a more state-of-the-art emergency care area," said Foster.

## Dept. of Public Safety to begin drug testing

Departments of Public Safety Director Col. Mike Coppage recently announced the agency will conduct random drug testing of employees to help ensure their safety and that of the public.

"The use of illegal controlled substances, the abuse of legally obtained controlled substances, or the use or presence of alcohol while on duty jeopardizes the safety of departmental employees and the citizens of this state," said Coppage.

In accordance with DPS Policy Order 25, testing will be used to detect the unlawful use of alcohol and controlled substances, according to Coppage. The policy also provides that any employee who refuses to submit to testing will be placed on mandatory annual leave and face disciplinary action.

Under the procedure, nonsworn personnel in sensitive positions and arresting officers will be tested, Coppage said.

Troops will be selected at random, and employees within troops randomly selected for testing.

Coppage said the policy order providing for random drug testing has been in place since 1991, and that "re-implementing" it is just good public policy.

"It is imperative that we, as law enforcement professionals, set the highest example possible for the public we serve by remaining drug-free," said Coppage.



2003 South Alabama Junior 4-H District Meats Judging Champions...Back row left to right - Anna Beth Sawyer, New Brockton; Brandon Bell, New Brockton; Caitlin White, Zion Chapel; Tierney Starks, Elba. Middle row left to right - Rebecca Thompson, Zion Chapel; Michelle Jones, Enterprise; Brianna Bailey, Elba. Front row - K.D. Barnes, Enterprise.

## Arbor Day Foundation gives free trees

Ten free white flowering dogwood trees will be given to each person who joins The National Arbor Day Foundation during August 2003. The free trees are part of the nonprofit Foundation's Trees for America campaign.

The trees will be shipped postpaid at the right time for planting between October 15 and December 10 with enclosed planting instructions. The six to twelve inch trees are guaranteed to grow or they will be replaced free of charge.

Members also receive a subscription to the Foundation's colorful bimonthly publication, *Arbor Day*, and The Tree Book with information about tree planting and care.

The receive the free trees, send a \$10 membership contribution to TEN DOGWOODS, National Arbor Day Foundation, 100 Arbor Avenue, Nebraska City, NE 68410, by August 31, 2003.

Elba Chamber of Commerce Banquet  
Thursday, Sept. 18

### PUBLIC NOTICE

I, James Alto Gray, dba - Grava Grocery, have made application to the City of Elba for a 050-Retail Beer off premises consumption at this location, 1501 Martin L. King Drive, Elba, Alabama. A public hearing will be held by the City Council in their regular meeting in the Council Chamber in City Hall at 5:30 p.m., Monday, August 25, 2003.

## Coffee County Arts Alliance presents

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2003 South Alabama Junior 4-H District Runner Up Livestock Judging Champions...Back row left to right - Jake Blackmon, Kinston; Daniel Kelley, New Brockton; Brandon Griswald, New Brockton; Hayden Goodson, Zion Chapel; Jonathan Sanders, New Hope; Chase Hendrix, New Brockton. Middle row left to right - Adam Pope, New Brockton; Samantha Fairly, New Hope; Jesse Driver, Kinston; Paul Hollon, New Brockton; Britney Costigan, New Brockton. Front row left to right - Tyler Parker, Enterprise; Bryan Hollon, New Brockton; Hunter Goodson, Zion Chapel.

## Alabamians again advised to protect themselves from mosquitoes

Nine human cases of West Nile virus infection have been reported in the state during 2003, including two confirmed deaths in persons in their 80s. WNV infections in humans have been reported from the following counties: Baldwin, two cases including one fatal; Blount, one case; Geneva, two cases; Marshall, one case; Monroe, one case; Shelby, one case; and Talladega, one fatal case.

West Nile virus and Eastern Equine Encephalitis virus have been detected across a broad geographic region of the state. West Nile virus has thus far been detected in mosquitoes, horses, birds and humans in 21 counties in Alabama. Eastern Equine Encephalitis virus has been detected in mosquitoes, horses, birds and an emu distributed across 18 counties in Alabama.

The cases highlight the need to take personal precautionary measures to prevent exposure and reduce the risk of being bitten by infected mosquitoes. "We continue to be concerned, and we advise Alabamians to take precautions to avoid mosquito bites," said Dr. Donald Williamson, state health officer. "All Alabamians should assume that mosquitoes infected with mosquito-borne virus are in their communities and we anticipate additional cases. The risk of dis-

ease from mosquito bites will probably increase and only subside when a freeze in late fall kills the mosquitoes."

In 2002 Alabama experienced 49 human cases of West Nile virus infection, three of which were fatal.

Both viruses in humans cause a spectrum of illness ranging from infection without any symptoms to encephalitis involving fever, headache and possibly confusion, disorientation, stupor, tremors, convulsions, paralysis, coma and death. Most people who are infected do not get sick. People with encephalitis are sick enough that they will seek medical care and be hospitalized. The seriousness of an illness may depend on a person's health and age.

West Nile virus affects the elderly most severely and Eastern Equine Encephalitis is most severe in both the young and the elderly. Eastern Equine Encephalitis in humans can have a mortality rate as high as 30 percent, considerably higher than that seen with West Nile encephalitis.

To lower the risk of being bitten by mosquitoes, persons should remember the five D's of Prevention: Dunk, Dawn, Dress, DEET and Drain. Avoid being outside during dawn and dusk when mosquitoes are most

active. Dress to cover your skin with protective clothing. Protect bare skin with mosquito repellent that contains DEET, and drain empty containers holding stagnant water in which mosquitoes breed.

Avoiding mosquito bites and eliminating mosquito-breeding sites will help protect individuals and the community from West Nile virus and Eastern Equine Encephalitis and the other mosquito-borne viruses that occur in Alabama. These viruses are maintained by transmission between birds and mosquitoes.

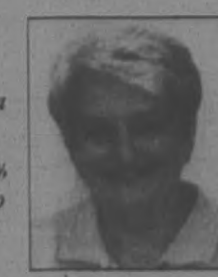
However, sometimes the viruses spread to humans and other animals by mosquitoes that feed on infected birds and then bite humans and other animals. People contribute to the continuing cycle of these viruses by maintaining environments (especially standing water) in which mosquitoes can lay eggs. These mosquito-borne viruses are not spread person-to-person, horse-to-person, or horse-to-horse. A person or animal is usually infected through the bite of an infected mosquito. The key to protection is avoiding mosquito bites.

Information about West Nile virus can be found on the ADPH Web site at <http://www.adph.org/westnile-virus/>.



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